
Education Committee

HB 2045

Brief Description: Providing a salary bonus for teachers who maintain certification from the national board for professional teaching standards.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunter, Tom, Dunshee, Jarrett, Fromhold, Anderson, Hunt, Linville and Haigh.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Providing a \$3,500 annual bonus to teachers who attain certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- Permits the Legislature to cap program expenditures when 5 percent of the state's eligible teachers attain certification.
- Adopts an expiration date of July 1, 2011.

Hearing Date: 2/28/05

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides advanced, voluntary certification for experienced teachers and school counselors. The NBPTS was created as a way for the teaching profession to recognize highly accomplished teaching practices. A certificate awarded by the NBPTS is intended to show that a teacher or school counselor has been judged by his or her peers as one who meets high and rigorous professional standards. The NBPTS is governed by a 63-member board of directors, of whom a majority are classroom teachers. The organization is funded through gifts and grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation.

The NBPTS certifies teachers in 24 fields using a rigorous process of assessment and evaluation, for which those seeking certification pay a fee. The standards used in the process are developed by committees of teachers and other experts and are structured around student developmental levels and subject areas. There are about 581 educators with NBPTS certification working in Washington schools, about double the number of teachers that had NBPTS certification in 2003.

Under rules adopted by the State Board of Education, NBPTS certification will satisfy all state requirements for continuing education and for obtaining the state's professional certificate.

The 2003-2005 biennial budget provided funding for a \$3,500 salary bonus for teachers who obtained NBPTS certification. The bonus was intended to provide recognition for the teachers' outstanding performance. The budget language stipulated that the bonuses are not included in pension calculations.

Educators that seek NBPTS certification in 2005 will be assessed a fee of \$2,300. Scholarship assistance with some or all of the fee is available from foundations, school districts and the federal government. In addition, the state, Washington Mutual, and the Gates and Stuart Foundations have joined together to create a support program for NBPTS candidates.

Summary of Bill:

Teachers who have attained certification from the NBPTS will receive a \$3,500 bonus for each year that the teachers maintain that certification. The bonus will not be included in a district's average salary calculation and is exempt from statutory salary limits.

The Legislature may cap program expenditures at the amount required to pay a \$3,500 bonus to 5 percent of the public school teachers eligible for such certification. If the program is capped and the number of eligible teachers exceeds the amount appropriated, each teacher will get a pro-rata share of the amount provided.

By August 1, 2008, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) will review the NBPTS certification standards to determine whether they are sufficiently rigorous and aligned to student achievement. By December 15, 2010, the PESB will report to the appropriate House and Senate committees whether the bonuses should be continued, modified or eliminated.

The bonuses expire on July 1, 2011.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 16, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.